

WHAT WILL THE CAD DO TO RESOLVE MY COMPLAINT?

The Consumer Assistance Division will mediate with the utility and will issue a written decision on your complaint. We resolve issues such as:

- ▶ Deciding payment arrangement to get service reconnected when possible;
- ▶ Terms of payment arrangements;
- ▶ Amount of deposits;
- ▶ Determining whether utilities violated the Commission's rules and regulation; and
- ▶ Whether the utility may disconnect a customer's service.

The PUC does not discriminate in employment or in the provision of services because of race, creed, national origin, sex, political affiliation, religion, ancestry or disability. We will provide reasonable accommodation upon your request.

This is a publication of the MPUC
and is printed under
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Maine Public Utilities Commission
242 State Street, Station 18
Augusta, ME 04333-0018

Do You Have A Complaint?



Maine Public Utilities Commission
242 State Street
18 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0018
207-287-3831
<http://www.state.me.us/mpuc/>
E-mail: maine.puc@state.me.us
TTY: 1-800-437-1220

The Maine Public Utilities Commission Can Help You!

WHAT DOES THE MAINE PUC DO?

The Maine Public Utilities Commission regulates Maine electric, telephone, water and natural gas utilities as well as water transport in Casco Bay. These utilities are in most cases the only provider of their service. The Maine PUC's job is to make sure these companies provide you, their customers, with adequate service at reasonable prices. We **do not** regulate cable television companies, sewer districts, fuel oil, propane or gasoline dealers.

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HOW CAN THE PUC HELP ME WITH MY COMPLAINT?

The Consumer Assistance Division (CAD) is part of the Maine Public Utilities Commission. We have specially trained staff that assist

customers to resolve their complaints with utilities.

WHAT TYPES OF COMPLAINTS DOES THE CAD HANDLE?

The CAD investigates complaints involving quality of service, billing disputes, rates, costs to extend utility lines, disconnection of utility service and deposits. More specific examples:

- ▶ Problems making a payment arrangement;
- ▶ Whether utilities properly notified customers before disconnecting utility service;
- ▶ Timeliness of utility repairs;
- ▶ Utility repairs that didn't solve the problem;
- ▶ Whether utility bills are accurate;
- ▶ Timeliness and costs involved to extend utility service to a new location;
- ▶ Meter problems;
- ▶ Unusually high usage; and
- ▶ Directory listings.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT?

Before you contact the CAD for assistance, you must first contact the utility to give them a chance to resolve the problem. Call the utility at the telephone number on the bill or disconnection notice. The utility is required by law to work with you to try to resolve the problem. If you are not satisfied with the utility representative's attempt to resolve your problem, ask to speak with a manager or supervisor. The utility is required to investigate your complaint and give you the results of their investigation, in writing, and within a reasonable period of time. The utility must try in good faith

to settle your dispute. For example, if you cannot pay your bill in full, the utility should give you a chance to make an installment payment arrangement.

CAN THE UTILITY DISCONNECT MY SERVICE WHILE MY COMPLAINT IS PENDING?

A utility cannot disconnect your service while it is investigating your complaint or while the CAD is investigating your complaint. However, if you have a complaint concerning part of your bill, you are responsible for paying that portion of your bill that is not in dispute. The CAD may set a temporary payment arrangement while your complaint is being investigated. If you do not pay or make a payment arrangement on the undisputed amounts, the utility may continue to collect or even disconnect your service for the undisputed amount after it sends you a disconnect notice.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO STATE MY COMPLAINT?

- ▶ Know your rights. Review the Commission's booklet, "*At your Service*" to learn your rights and responsibilities as a residential customer;
- ▶ Identify your problem or question clearly. Be specific. Give details. Organize your facts in chronological order. Have copies of bills, receipts, letters, or disconnect notices that supports your case. If you send the documents, send copies, not originals;
- ▶ If you filed a written complaint, write legibly. Put your name, address,

telephone number and account number on the letter;

- ▶ It may be tempting to let your feelings go and express your frustration regarding your complaint. However, this will not help you get your complaint resolved. Concentrate on the facts of your case and try to be patient;
- ▶ Keep good records. Keep copies of all letters concerning your complaint. Make notes of telephone conversations; and
- ▶ Contact your utility customers representative first. Calmly tell the representative what the problem is and what action you would like the utility to take. If the representative cannot resolve your complaint, ask to speak to the manager or supervisor.

WHAT IF I'M STILL NOT SATISFIED?

If the utility does not resolve your problem, call or write the CAD. We will get a copy of the utility's record of your complaint and we will review it. We will not allow the utility to disconnect your service while we are investigating your complaint, but you must call or write us before the disconnection date stated on the connect notice at the address listed at the end of this bulletin. The CAD receives many calls. You may not be able to get through right away, but keep trying. You may also hear a taped message when you call, asking that you leave your name and phone number. Please do as the tape instructs and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

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